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WOMEN COMINFORM MIGRANTS FROM YUGOSLAVIA: THOSE WHO LEFT AND THOSE WHO RETURNED. EXAMPLES FROM THE USSR, CZECHOSLOVAKIA, AND HUNGARY

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My research delves into the representation of female IB migrants through the lens of the Security Service and the monitoring of their movements. It sheds light on women who emigrated to Eastern European countries and, in some cases, returned to Yugoslavia. Using Secret Service documents, the paper will demonstrate surveillance practices towards both men and women, with a focus on enhancing those specific to women. Focusing on several women within the IB emigration, the study highlights their individual experiences, showcasing diverse backgrounds that were deemed significant by Yugoslav authorities despite perceived hostilities. While primarily focused on the period from 1948 to the mid-1950s, the research spans geographically across the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. This article seeks to enhance migration and gender studies by providing insights into women's experiences within the IB emigration, emphasizing key moments within them.

Keywords: Cominform emigration, IB, women, Yugoslav Secret Service, UDBA, SDS, Surveillance, Yugoslavia, USSR, Czechoslovakia, Hungary

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Introduction

In the 20th century, various migration processes shaped Yugoslavia's development, some well-documented and others overlooked. One such case is the Yugoslav Cominform emigration, following the 1948 Cominform Resolution that led to Yugoslavia's isolation from the USSR and the Eastern Bloc. As a result, many Yugoslav citizens chose to emigrate to these countries. Cominform was dissolved in 1956 following political shifts and the normalization of relations with Yugoslavia.[1]

Some of the Yugoslav citizens who sided with the USSR and Eastern Bloc countries during the Cominform crisis left Yugoslavia and joined earlier waves of Yugoslav economic emigrants. This paper focuses on a largely unexplored group – female Cominform emigrants. That particular topic has been largely left unexplored, since migration processes have been for long analysed from a gender-blind perspective and the research has been mostly focused on men or, in smaller amount, families.

While discussing the identity and migration patterns of Cominform women, I will also briefly examine the position and role of women in postwar Yugoslavia, connecting them to the behavioral patterns of IB women. The research also highlights the nuances in how they were monitored by the Security Service compared to men and explores individual experiences of a few particular women within the IB emigration.

IB emigrant women came from diverse backgrounds, but they were uniformly viewed by Yugoslav authorities as hostile and subjected to surveillance. After the normalization of relations between the USSR and Yugoslavia in the 1950s, some women returned but remained under close watch, suspected of working with foreign secret services.

I will narrow down the scope of this paper to women Cominform migrants to the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, as well as returnees to Yugoslavia, from 1948 to the 1960s. The literature on the topic of women Cominform migrants is nearly non-existent, largely overlooked by historians and researchers. Many authors have studied the broader context of the Yugoslav-Soviet split and Cominform Resolution – like for example, Ivo Banac, Dušan Bilandžić, Raif Dizdarević, Tvrtko Jakovina, Jeronim Perović, Martin Previšić, Svetozar Rajak or Bogusław Wołoszański.[2] Some, like Christian Axboe Nielsen, Josip

[1] Ivo Banac, *Sa Staljinom protiv Tita: informbirovski rascjepi u jugoslavenskom komunističkom pokretu* (Zagreb: Globus, 1990).

[2] Ivo Banac, *Sa Staljinom protiv Tita*; Dušan Bilandžić, *Hrvatska moderna povijest* (Zagreb: Golden marketing, 1999; Raif Dizdarević, *Sudbonosni podvig Jugoslavije. Podsjećanje na istorijsko NE staljinizmu, događaj koji je predijelio budućnost Jugoslavije* (Sarajevo: Udruženje

Mihaljević or Zdenko Radelić studied the work of the Yugoslav Secret Service and its activities towards "hostile" emigration.[3] However, only a few dealt with IB emigration, and none of them covered emigration in all Eastern European countries, nor all its groups, nor aspects of activity. Among the authors who have addressed the topic, Martin Previšić was the first in Croatia to research women Cominform migrants.[4] Péter Vukman, who wrote about Cominform emigration in Hungary, also explored the lives of IB migrants in the same country.[5] However, Ondřej Vojtěchovsky, a Czech historian, extensively examined Yugoslav Cominform emigration. In his comprehensive monograph titled "From Prague against Tito!" along with several preceding articles on the subject, he provided a thorough understanding of the causes, compliance with the Cominform Resolution, emigration, and challenges faced by individuals who migrated to former Czechoslovakia after the Resolution.[6]

This paper's research is primarily derived from archival documents of the Yugoslav intelligence service, specifically the State Security Service of the Republic Internal Affairs Secretariat of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (*Službe državne sigurnosti Republičkog sekretarijata za unutrašnje poslove Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske, SDS RSUP SRH*), housed in the Croatian State Archives in Zagreb. These records, previously classified and inaccessible to re-

za modernu historiju, 2018); Tvrtko Jakovina, "Značenje Rezolucije IB-a 1948. za svijet i Jugoslaviju," in *1948: povijesni razlaz sa staljinskim totalitarizmom?* (Vol. 2), ed. T. Badovinac (Zagreb: Savez društava "Josip Broz Tito" Hrvatske, 2009); Jeronim Perović, "The Tito-Stalin Split: A Reassessment in Light of New Evidence," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 9 (2) 2007: 32–63. https://doi.org/10.1162/jcws.2007.9.2.32.; Svetozar Rajak, "No bargaining chips, no spheres of interest: The Yugoslav origins of cold war non-alignment," *Journal of Cold War Studies* 16 (1) 2014: 146 - 179.; Tvrtko Jakovina and Martin Previšić, eds., *The Tito-Stalin Split 70 Years After. First edition* (Zagreb, Ljubljana: University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Department of History; University of Ljubljana Faculty of Arts, Department of History, 2020); Bogusław Wołoszański, *To okrutno stoljeće* (Zagreb: Profil knjiga 2013).

[3] Christian Axboe Nielsen, *Jugoslavija i politička ubojstva* (Zagreb: profil knjiga, 2022); Josip Mihaljević, *Kako je operirala UDBA: operacija "Paromlin" i sudbina Vinka Markovića* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2022); Zdenko Radelić, *Obavještajni centri, Ozna i Udba u Hrvatskoj (1942.–1954.), knjiga 1 i knjiga 2: Kadrovi* (Zagreb: Hrvatski institut za povijest, 2019); Radelić, "KPJ i sigurnosno-obavještajni sustav u Hrvatskoj (1941.-1951.)," *Historijski zbornik* 68, br. 1 (2015): 73-105. https://hrcak.srce.hr/161489.

[4] Martin Previšić, "Informbiroovska emigracija," *Historijski zbornik* 65, br. 1 (2012): 171-186. https://hrcak.srce.hr/117735, 2012).

[5] Péter Vukman, "Political Activities of Ibeovci Emigrants in Hungary (1948-1953)," *Токови Историје*, no. 3 2017: 35–58. https://doi.org/10.31212/tokovi.2017.3.vuk.35-58; Péter Vukman, "Social Composition and Everyday Life of Cominform Emigrants in Hungary (1948-1980)," *Istorija 20. veka* 36 (1/2018): 133–46. https://doi.org/10.29362/ist20veka.2018.1.vuk.133-146.)

[6] Ondřej Vojtěchovsky. *Iz Praga protiv Tita!: Jugoslavenska informbiroovska emigracija u Čehoslovačkoj*. (Zagreb: Srednja Europa, 2016.)

searchers, comprise various reports, analyses, lists, and over 65,000 personal files of individuals under surveillance, offering an invaluable and extensive source of previously untapped information.[7] Some documentation specifically addresses women, although information is often dispersed across general reports on IB emigration activities, various analyses of the Service, and within individual files.

In this paper, only a subset of the SDS material was utilized due to the article's limited scope. Various documents concerning the activities of the IB emigration and returnees to Yugoslavia were consulted. While there was extensive surveillance of IB emigration before the mid-1950s, focus shifted to a new group – returnees after normalization, resulting in substantial documentation.

It's important to acknowledge that periodic destruction of documents, particularly personal files, within the SDS may have led to the loss of files concerning IB migrant women.[8] It's also important to consider the potential lack of credibility in SDS documents, especially statements from monitored individuals. Cross-referencing with alternative perspectives would be beneficial, although often not possible.

Women in Post-War Period of Yugoslavia

To understand female IB emigration, it's important to consider the gendered position of women in post-war Yugoslavia. As Morokvašić notes, a gender perspective offers new insights into migration, highlighting women as active agents.[9]

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[7] The inception of the Security and Intelligence Service in communist Yugoslavia traces back to the Second World War, gaining official establishment in 1944 with the creation of the Department for People's Protection (Odjeljenje za zaštitu naroda, OZNA). After the Constitution of the Federal People's Republic of Yugoslavia was adopted on January 31, 1946, a restructuring ensued, dividing it into civil and military services. The OZNA underwent changes, leading to the establishment of the State Security Administration (Uprava državne bezbjednosti, UDBA). From 1966 onward, the UDBA operated in Croatia as the State Security Service of the Republic Secretariat for Internal Affairs of the Socialist Republic of Croatia (Služba državne sigurnosti Republičkog sekretarijata za unutrašnje poslove Socijalističke republike Hrvatske, SDS RSUP SRH), followed by subsequent reorganization. (Nenad Bukvić, *Gastarbajteri pod nadzorom službe državne sigurnosti. Odabrani dokumenti (1977. - 1990.)* (Zagreb: Hrvatski državni arhiv, 2021); Radelić, *KPJ*; Axboe Nielsen, *Jugoslavija*).

[8] Axboe Nielsen, *Jugoslavija,* 58; Mihaljević, *Kako je operirala UDBA*, 9.

[9] Mirjana Morokvašić, "Gendering Migration," *Migracijske i etničke teme* 30, br. 3 (2014): 371, https://doi.org/10.11567/met.30.3.4.

In the aftermath of Second World War, Yugoslavia proclaimed and legally established a commendable position for women. The nation, inspired by the Soviet socio-political model, as explained by Ivan Simic in the publication *Soviet Influences on Postwar Yugoslav Gender Politics*, diligently incorporated women's formal rights into its Constitution and laws, covering areas of equality, family, and social rights.[10] This emulation aimed to infuse gender equality into Yugoslav society. However, true equality, as Milinkov argues, relied on economic independence through education and employment, something many women struggled to achieve. Disparities remained, particularly in politics and decision-making.[11] Another author, Sklevicky, suggests that gender equality was not a main goal of the socialist revolution, but rather an unintended result. Tensions between revolutionary ideals and patriarchal norms complicated efforts toward full gender equality.[12]

In the Yugoslav context, it's crucial to highlight the significant role played by the Women's Antifascist Front (AFŽ), the largest mass women's organization that emerged from the partisan movement and operated under the patronage of the Communist Party. AFŽ aimed to integrate women into public life and promote gender equality. However, despite the formal removal of traditional divisions, challenges persisted in implementing these values.[13] Following the AFŽ's dissolution in 1953, the Marxist perspective shifted to integrating women's issues into broader social concerns. This encouraged women's participation in self-management, marking a new approach to addressing gender-related issues.[14] Despite formal support for women's emancipation, retraditionalization occurred. Women returned to traditional roles, and female workers faced a 'double burden'. Titoists and the AFŽ rejected feminism as bourgeois and prioritized socialism over gender equality.[15]

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[10] Ivan Simic, *Soviet Influences on Postwar Yugoslav Gender Policies* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018: 55-56, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-94382-4.

[11] Smiljana Milinkov, "Medijska prezentacija žena pedesetih godina prošlog veka u Jugoslaviji: retradicionalizacija društva vs. emancipacije na primeru Autonomne pokrajine Vojvodine," *Narodna umjetnost* 51, br. 2 (2014): 173-190. https://doi.org/10.15176/vol51no209173-190.

[12] Chiara Bonfiglioli, "Women's Political and Social Activism in the Early Cold War Era: The Case of Yugoslavia." *Aspasia* 8 (1) 2014: 3, https://doi.org/10.3167/asp.2014.080102.

[13] Lydia Sklevicky, *Konji, Žene, Ratovi* (Zagreb: Ženska infoteka, 1996.), 55-56.

[14] Chiara Bonfiglioli, "State Socialist Women's Organizations within Yugoslav Factories: A Case Study of Local Activism in the Duga Resa Cotton Mill." *Social History* 47 (1) 2022: 92, https://doi.org/10.1080/03071022.2022.2009693).

[15] Sabrina Ramet, *Gender Politics in the Western Balkans: Women and Society in Yugoslavia and the Yugoslav Successor States* (University Park, Pa.: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999:5; Smiljana Milinkov, "Medijska prezentacija žena pedesetih godina prošlog veka u Jugoslaviji: retradicionalizacija društva vs. emancipacije na primeru Autonomne pokrajine Vojvodine", *Narodna umjetnost*, 51(2) 2014: 173-174, https://doi.org/10.15176/vol51no209).

The prevailing historical interpretation suggests that Cold War women's mass organizations were not solely tools of state control but also spaces for women's political agency. While Yugoslav socialism formally supported women's rights, women's actual political power and representation remained limited. Despite this, many women were actively involved in social and political spheres and opposed "the system". Recent research has shown that these women exercised agency within the constraints of the system, demonstrating that a lack of autonomy does not equate to a lack of political agency, which was complex and multilayered.[16] Bonfiglioli also disputes the idea that the Cold War era was marked by gender conservatism, arguing that women's political activism played a key role during this period. While Yugoslavia formally recognized women's equality, second-wave feminists criticized the persistence of patriarchal relations. Petrović and Mihajlović Trbovc agree that women's ability to navigate both within and outside the state socialist system was key to their agency and pursuit of the common good.[17]

Yugoslavia's legal equality for women was not always reflected in reality. This, along with the decline of women's political participation and the persistence of traditional roles, may have influenced some women's dissatisfaction with the system and their attraction to Eastern Bloc ideology. These factors could have played a role in women's decisions about emigration or return, as well as the activities of women involved in the intelligence community. While most women emigrated or remained in emigration for personal reasons, some prominent women actively opposed the Yugoslav regime. A comprehensive analysis of this group would require considering various factors such as their origin, age, social and marital status, education, place of residence, previous political involvement, and participation in the partisan movement. Many prominent IB women in exile advocated for women's rights in Yugoslavia and participated in public life. Some had experience living abroad, while others were new to exile. However, they all shared a disapproval of the Yugoslav system and leadership, which was particularly evident among those who returned to Yugoslavia.

[16] Bonfiglioli, "State socialist women's organizations," 90; Bonfiglioli, "Women's Political and Social Activism," 19.

[17] Tanja Petrović, Jovana Mihajlović Trbovc, "(Un)making Women's Biographies in the Wake of the Loss of the Socialist Project in Yugoslavia," *Wagadu: A Journal of Transnational Women's and Gender Studies,* 2020: 24.

Women as Part of the IB Emigration and Secret Service Surveillance

Although my focus is on exploring the women of IB emigration, it's worth noting that the majority of IB emigrants were men. Neverthless, studies on migration often neglect gender considerations, which can provide deeper insights into migration dynamics and women's experiences (Morokvašić, *Gendering Migration*, 371).

IB emigrants – both men and women were significantly influenced by the political dynamics of the Eastern European communist parties and authorities. Following the 1948 events, propaganda from these countries turned hostile toward Yugoslavia, forcing emigrants to choose between loyalty to Yugoslavia or their new host countries, a choice with lasting consequences. How many IB emigrants were there? Between the 1948 Cominform Resolution and the 1955 Belgrade Declaration, 3,899 people emigrated from Yugoslavia or refused to return, becoming part of the IB emigration, according to UDBA.

Table 1: Number of IB emigrants by year[18]

Year	Number of Individuals
1948	1340
1949	1160
1950	570
1951	313
1952	155
1953	132
1954	104
1955	35

[18] Croatia (HR) – Croatian State Archives, Zagreb (HDA) – Fond 1561 - Služba državne sigurnosti Republičkog sekretarijata za unutrašnje poslove Socijalističke Republike Hrvatske (SDS RSUP SRH), Šifra 1, Ekstremna emigracija, jugoslavenska emigracija i lica na radu u inozemstvu koja djeluju neprijateljski, 10. Jugoslavenska informbiroovska emigracija, 10/2. Informbiroovska emigracija u razoblju od 1948. do 1955. godine).

According to their occupations, the IB emigration was comprised of the following:

Table 2: IB emigration by occupation[19]

Occupation	Number
Workers	454
Peasants	905
Officers	266
Non-commissioned officers	184
Soldiers	309
UDBA officials	31
Members of the People's Militia	39
Students and pupils	736
Officials	532
Others	433

While no gender-specific statistics are available, women were part of the IB emigration. Women joined the IB emigration through three primary avenues. Many initially pursued education in Eastern Bloc nations and after WWII, professional exchanges increased. Young people of both sexes studied at universities and academies in "people's democratic countries" and some decided to stay in the USSR or other Eastern Bloc nations after the Cominform Resolution. In 1948, data showed that many Yugoslav students were studying in the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and other Eastern Bloc countries.

Table 3: Number of Yugoslav students and percentage of women in certain EE countries[20]

Country	Academic Year	Total Students from Croatia	Total Students from Yugoslavia	Female Students from Croatia	Percentage of Female Students
Soviet Union	1946/47	38	229	19	50.00%
Soviet Union	1947/48	32	198	14	43.75%
Czechoslovakia	1945/46	37	271	8	21.62%
Czechoslovakia	1946/47	34	190	7	20.59%
Eastern Bloc	1948	-	1,768	-	-

[19] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/2. Informbiroovska emigracija u razoblju od 1948. do 1955. godine.

[20] Slobodan Selinić, *Jugoslovensko-čehoslovački odnosi (1945-1955),* (Beograd: Institut za noviju istoriju Srbije, 2010), 87, 474-523.

Unfortunately, statistics based on gender for the entire period from 1945 to 1948 are not available. However, it is evident that there was a high percentage of female students in the USSR and a lower percentage in Czechoslovakia.

Another group of women from Yugoslavia emigrated post-Cominform Resolution, often alongside family members or partners who shared their political views. These women were thus in an unfavorable and dangerous situation – some of them were followed, arrested by the Yugoslav police, interrogated, imprisoned, and some were later released. In some cases, relatives or husbands emigrated illegally first and were already in exile when the women followed, providing support and sharing political views.

The third group consisted of women from Eastern European countries who married Yugoslav IB emigrants in their home countries. Many of these women later returned to Yugoslavia with their families. They often returned due to their husbands' wishes, but the women played significant roles in Yugoslavia. This group was the most closely monitored by the Secret Service, and there are extensive archival records on its members.

The secret services of countries of immigration were suspicious of IB immigrants from Yugoslavia, suspecting them of potentially acting as Yugoslav agents. As a result, these emigrant communities were under special surveillance. Being a new form of political emigration, the Yugoslav government also saw the IB emigration as potential threat to state stability and thus actively monitored their activities through police forces of the individual republics of Yugoslavia, the destination countries, and diplomatic missions. It was a priority to prevent their actions at all costs.[21]

Indeed, in each Eastern European country during the period 1948-1950, an emigrant organization was formed, and in Moscow, there was a Coordination Committee composed of representatives from these organizations from all Eastern European countries.[22] The *UDBA* also believed that *IB* emigrants were used by Eastern European countries for various types of espionage work – from propaganda in radio stations and newspaper editorial offices, letters with content hostile to Yugoslavia, to recruiting Yugoslav citizens abroad for various sabotage actions in the country, from 1953, under the coverage of repatriation. Therefore, in 1958, repatriation of emigrants was restricted, and in 1961, legal proceedings were initiated against 1104 emigrants. After a review, only 40 faced charges. The 1962 Amnesty Law led to decreased Eastern European intelligence activity and public bans on hostile emigration activities against Yugoslavia – aiming for the normalization of relations. From the early

21 HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 4.1_13 Početak i stanje IB emigracije, 1968.

22 Ibid.

1960s, there was an accelerated process of differentiation within the IB emigration, in the view of the SDS, dividing them into moderate (the majority, 80%) and extreme factions.

Men often assumed leadership roles in Yugoslav IB emigration, displaying higher levels of political activism and reflecting traditional gender roles. Migration patterns and discourses were gendered in both Yugoslavia and the receiving countries.

In the case of the Yugoslav Secret service in monitoring both male and female members of the IB emigration, the situation is similar, but most analyses and reports are not gender-specific. There are no explicit instructions on how to surveil women differently from men. Procedures and directives were mostly uniform, with differences in specific reports and personal files.

The *SDS* envisioned a whole series of measures to monitor the activities of IB emigration in EE countries, but also repatriates. Repatriation was possible for all citizens who remained or defected after 1948, except for those known to have committed serious crimes, incited them, engaged in acts of espionage, or deserted from the Yugoslav Army.[23]

In the archives of the SDS we find separate units of records on the monitoring of emigrants in all the EE countries. The surveillance of emigrants was organized according to countries, closely monitoring the movements of emigrants as well as the activities of the intelligence services of those countries. There is extensive and the largest documentation for USSR, which was considered the main threat for the Yugoslav regime, as a leader of the Eastern bloc, where many emigrants found their new homes, following by Bulgaria, Romania, Czechoslovakia, Albania, Hungary and Poland. The fact is that the subordination of the IB countries to USSR enabled The People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (*Narodnyj komissariat vnutrennih del, NKVD*) to strongly influence the work of the intelligence services in the EE countries and to give them instructions. According to the SDS, NKVD officers recruited emigrants and sent them to Yugoslavia, regardless of their host country's intelligence services. EE countries trained emigrants for security roles, with the USSR, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria being particularly active.[24]

[23] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/2. Informbiroovska emigracija u razoblju od 1948. do 1955. godine.

[24] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/6, Jugoslavenska emigracija u istočno-europskim zemljama od 1952. do 1953. g., 1. Elaborat SSUP-a, Prilozi, May 16, 1983.

Those who left – the emigrant women's activities abroad

Until 1953, EE countries focused on politically elevating IB emigrants. Political courses and debate clubs were organized, efforts were made in analysing political literature, articles, and commentaries about Yugoslavia, and emigrant press from all EE countries. That was, according to SDS, a preparation for the recruitment efforts for individuals to be inserted into Yugoslavia with espionage and sabotage tasks. Emigrant clubs were established in almost all major centers of EE countries, gathering male and female emigrants. In Budapest, for example, the club was located at Keleti Karoly Street No. 26 – a large and beautiful building, modernly furnished with spacious rooms and halls, and a large courtyard. Emigrants there studied, held lectures, and socialized, aiming for easier control and recruitment by counterintelligence services of EE countries. Emigrants of both sexes were also tasked with spying on each other, causing a paranoia of arrests and mutual distrust, while some took advantage of the benefits they received as informants.

Emigrant newspapers, totaling eight across Eastern Europe, were key in propaganda efforts, publishing regularly. *Nova borba'*led in Czechoslovakia since 1948. In Hungary, it was *Za ljudsko zmago* from 1951, and in the USSR, *Za socijalističku Jugoslaviju* from 1949. Editorial boards were closely linked to party agitprops, receiving directives.

In Hungary, the Democratic Alliance of South Slavs published *Naše novine,* with Mara Stevanović editing its *Pioneer Corner.*[25] IB emigrants also created anti-Yugoslav radio programs, aiming to criticize the social order in Yugoslavia and urging citizens to fight against the regime. Women played active roles as authors, speakers, and secretaries.

One of the highly active IB emigrants in Czechoslovakia was Dušanka Dragila. Together with her husband, Pero Dragila, who worked for the UDBA, they moved from the Embassy of the FNRJ in USA to Czechoslovakia, where they declared their allegiance to the IB Resolution. Dušanka, who graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy, was actively involved, alongside her husband, in writing articles for '*Nova borba*', broadcasting on radio *Slobodna Jugoslav*ija, being a member of the menagement of the Klub jugoslavenskih novinara, an antiyugoslav emigrant organization, and engaging in both public and private anti-Yugoslav activities. UDBA also believed that she sent various propaganda materials to Yugoslavia. Both had issues with other emigrant factions and the Czechoslovak secret service, and they unsuccessfully attempted to move to the USSR, but ultimately had to remain in Czechoslovakia. According to

[25] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/15 Jugoslavenska informbiroovska emigracija u Mađarskoj.

SDS data, Dušanka and her husband belonged to the ultra-left, pro-Chinese fraction of the emigration in Czechoslovakia. Dušanka mastered the Chinese language and engaged in translation work. Both were members of the Central Committee of the new Communist Party of Yugoslavia. After Pero suffered a stroke and could no longer actively participate, Dušanka assumed this role, leading the left-wing faction of the IB emigration, according to SDS. She never sought repatriation to Yugoslavia.[26]

Similar to the Dragilas, the Milunić couple, both doctors – Atena and Josip, who held a position in the health sector within the government of the People's Republic of Croatia and later in the federal government – chose not to return to Yugoslavia after completing their specialization in the United States in 1947. Instead, they settled in Czechoslovakia, aligning themselves with the IB Resolution. Both became prominent figures in the emigrant community, contributing to *Nova borba* and offering commentary on Radio Prague. Josip even served as the editor of *Nova borba* for a period. Atena, as recounted by their daughter Marta, meticulously edited and interpreted all of Josip's articles, although he was never fully content with her interpretations. Like Dragilas, the Milunić couple became involved in factional conflicts within the emigration community, which led to numerous problems in their lives. Over time, they began to question the views of the Eastern Bloc, which led to various challenges and prompted thoughts of returning to Yugoslavia, as expressed by Atena. Despite being required to obtain Czech citizenship for professional reasons, they never joined the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia. Atena frequently visited her relatives and friends in Yugoslavia but remained under constant surveillance by SDS informants, some of whom were close acquaintances. Refusing repatriation under amnesty, they wished to return only under the condition of a peaceful life, free from secret service pressure, though this never materialized. SDS also monitored their children, and their daughter Neva's fiancé, known as "Dado," was an SDS informant. Together with Neva, who agreed to cooperate with UDBA, "Dado" attempted to persuade Atena to surrender the archive and documents of her former late husband, from whom she had separated years earlier, to the Yugoslav embassy in Prague – a plan referred to as "Operation Archive". However, Atena insisted on inspecting the archive herself before considering any transfer, resulting in the operation's failure.[27]

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[26] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, Personal file nr. 230746, Dragila Dušanka; See also: Vojtěchovsky, *Iz Praga protiv Tita*, 88, 129, 229-30, 504, 610-632, 675.

[27] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, Personal file nr. 321122, Milunić Atrena; For more extensive information, see: Vojtěchovsky, *Iz Praga protiv Tita*, 129, 170-207, 415-417, 500-507, 651-653, 668.

In Hungary, the most prominent IB emigrants who edited and wrote for emigrant newspapers and led and designed radio programs were Boris Verstovšek and his wife Radmila[28]. Radmila Verstovšek studied at the Faculty of Economics and lived in the USA with her husband, a Yugoslav diplomat. After he supported the Cominform Resolution and resigned, they both moved to Prague in 1948. The local authorities wanted to keep the newcomers and offered them work and education with scholarships, which Radmila accepted.[29] She was highly active in the emigrant community, working at Prague's radio station with her husband. When the new emigrant newspaper *Za ljudsko zmago* was founded in Budapest, Slovenian-speaking staff were needed. The Soviets nominated her husband, Boris, as editor-in-chief, although he was also involved with the Czech emigrant newspaper *Nova Borba* and the radio station. With no other option, the Verstovšeks left Prague in 1951 for Budapest. Boris took the editor role and became the leader of the divided emigrant community.[30] Radmila, as in Prague, worked at a radio station on the Yugoslav program as a commentator, editor, and speaker. She wrote 4-5 articles weekly, often criticizing the Yugoslav leadership, with a focus on women's issues and social conditions in Yugoslavia. Her work was frequently praised, though both she and her husband were under surveillance by the Yugoslav Secret Service.[31] According to the testimony of Ksenija Dorolovečki, given to SDS, who was also a member of the IB emigration in Hungary, who returned to Yugoslavia, Radmila worked with AVH (OS Hungary). According to SDS documents, Radmila was quite satisfied with life in Hungary. She became a member of the Hungarian Workers' Party *(Magyar Dolgozók Pártja; MDP*), as she was a member of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia *(Komunistická strana Československa; KSČ*).[32]

Another prominent woman in the IB emigration was Bosiljka Marjanović Roganović, one of the most well-known and active figures in this movement. She was involved in the partisan movement and served on the District Committee of KPH Sinj, which sent her to study in the USSR in 1947, where she graduated as an agricultural engineer. While in the USSR, she married Đuro Roganović, a Montenegrin who trained there and became a lieutenant colonel in the Red Army. After supporting the Cominform Resolution, Bosiljka stayed

28 HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/6, 1983

29 Vojtěchovsky, *Iz Praga protiv Tita*, 151.

30 Ibid., 441-442.

31 HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/13, Jugoslavenska IB emigracija u Mađarskoj, 1. Elaborat – Pregled razvoja emigracije; Političko propagandna aktivnost emigracije; Korištenje emigracije za rad protiv Jugoslavije; Prilozi elaboratu, 1954.

32 HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/6, 1983.

in the USSR and became a leading voice in the emigrant community. She was an active correspondent for the emigrant newspaper *Za socijalističku Jugoslaviju*, joining the editorial board and writing articles encouraging Yugoslav women to fight against the Yugoslav regime and advocating for their social position. She also publicly criticized the FNRJ on Radio Moscow and participated in anti-Yugoslav demonstrations. In Moscow, she worked as a teacher at a technical school for agricultural mechanization. With support from Pero Popivoda, leader of the IB emigration in the USSR, and the Russians, she was elected to the Executive Committee of the International Women's Federation and became Chairperson of the AFŽ in emigration. Following Yugoslavia's expulsion from the Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) in 1949, she assumed the role of president of the expelled Yugoslav women's organization, using her position to influence women against Yugoslavia.[33] In December 1952, together with Popivoda and Vera Ljujić, she took part in the Congress of Peace Supporters in Vienna and gave a speech there as a member of the Executive Committee of the WIDF. She, along with Vera Ljujić, represented Yugoslav women at other international conferences. Bosiljka often criticized Yugoslav foreign policy, focusing on issues such as poor living standards, workers' rights – especially for women – and the dire conditions faced by children.[34]

In addition to prominent women, there were also those less visible but still active, usually emigrating with their husbands. For example, Ksenija Dorolovečki and Marija Bjelić emigrated to Hungary, where they were arrested and interrogated. After proving they were not UDBA agents, they became involved in the emigrant community, participating in radio broadcasts and writing critical letters. Both were recruited by Hungarian intelligence to carry out various tasks.[35]

In the IB emigration, women took on diverse roles, with more educated women assuming greater responsibility and engaging more in politics. Many mirrored their husbands' political views, although some played crucial roles. For example, Atena Milunić reportedly edited all her husband's articles, as he 'never learned to write,' according to their daughter.[36]

It's challenging to determine whether these women would have acted independently of their husbands' influence. However, it's evident that in their

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33 Bonfiglioli, *Women's Internationalism*, 446–461.

34 HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, Personnel dossier No 84949, Bosiljka Marjanović Roganović.

35 HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/13 Jugoslavenska IB emigracija u Mađarskoj, 1, 1954.

36 HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, Personal file nr. 321122, Milunić Atrena.

circumstances, some, like Bosiljka, Radmila, Dušanka or Atena, were highly active and purposeful. Engaged in activities against the Yugoslav regime, they embraced their new lives as members of the IB emigration, influencing others through public appearances and media engagement. This empowerment arguably exceeded that experienced by most women in Yugoslavia. Yet, alongside these politically engaged women, there were others in the IB emigration who lived relatively quiet lives, adhering to traditional gender roles of homemaking and caregiving. This suggests a layered reality regarding the position of women in emigration, reflecting the patriarchal norms that persisted within Yugoslavia.

Most emigrant activities declined after Yugoslavia and the USSR normalized relations following Stalin's death in 1953. Anti-Yugoslav newspapers and radio broadcasts ceased, though emigrants remained involved in milder tasks, including illegal border crossings disguised as repatriation. In this way, the Service reports, agents of the intelligence services of these countries were also smuggled into the country.

Those who returned – IB women in Yugoslavia

IB returnees were targeted by the Secret Service from the start of the repatriation process, with families where women were citizens of Eastern European countries monitored even more closely. Though these women were not originally part of the IB emigration, they were classified as such after marrying IB emigrants and returning to Yugoslavia. The Secret Service viewed them as political risks, suspecting collaboration with Eastern European intelligence, leading to thorough examinations upon re-entry, including highly detailed informational interviews.[37] Authorities feared these returnees could destabilize the country, especially given Yugoslavia's delicate position between East and West and its pursuit of self-managed socialism and the Non-Aligned Movement.

[37] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/7. Problem IB emigranata – povratnika iz istočno-europskih zemalja u NR Hrvatskoj – elaborat.

Table 4: Number of IB returnees in the period 1949-1966 by countries and republics of settlement in Yugoslavia[38]

Country of Origin	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Montenegro	Croatia	Macedonia	Slovenia	Serbia	Kosovo	Vojvodina	Total
	Montenegro	Croatia	Macedonia	Slovenia	Serbia	Kosovo	Vojvodina	Total	260
Bulgaria	2	1	4	29	-	78	2	6	122
Albania	2	84	-	-	-	12	15	4	117
Romania	-	1	3	1	1	45	-	52	103
Hungary	2	-	31	-	2	1	-	9	45
Czechoslovakia	2	-	9	5	1	12	-	3	32
Poland	1	-	1	-	-	5	-	-	7
Total:	**26**	**101**	**103**	**51**	**17**	**269**	**18**	**101**	**686**

Let's examine the case of Marija Šalavardić, a Croatian woman who joined the IB emigration and later returned to Yugoslavia. She illegally migrated to Hungary by swimming across the Drava River in 1950, following her husband Antun Šalavardić, who emigrated in 1949. Upon her arrival in Hungary, she was imprisoned for a year, suspected of being sent by the UDBA. Afterwards, she was provided accommodation and resided in Budapest, subsequently joining an emigrant organization. Despite lacking higher education, she actively engaged with the emigrant community by speaking on Radio Budapest and contributing articles to the emigrant newspaper *Za ljudsko zmago*, primarily focusing on women's issues in Yugoslavia and advocating for equality. However, after separating from her husband and facing difficulties raising a child alone, she agreed to cooperate with the Hungarian secret police (AVH). In return for better living conditions, she provided them with information on the Yugoslav emigrant community in Hungary. In a long statement she later made to the UDBA, she confirmed that almost all the emigrants in Budapest worked for AVH. The AVH created a network between them so that they could "protect" each other. Wanting to return to Yugoslavia, Marija approached the Yugoslav embassy and admitted her collaboration with the AVH, becoming a double agent. She provided detailed reports to Yugoslav authorities about the Hungarian secret police's activities, including her meetings with AVH agents and the information she was asked to collect. Marija also gave extensive details about the Yugoslav emigrants in Hungary, their organization, and personal information about key individuals.

[38] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, Šifra 0, Unutarnja problematika. 011/32. Neprijateljska djelatnost IB-povratnika i članova njihovih užih obitelji u razdoblju od 1974. do 1976. g. i rad SDB-a., 1. 9. 1977.

After her divorce was finalised, her attempts to repatriate were complicated by her ex-husband, Antun, a staunch IB emigrant who used his influence and perhaps also for personal reasons, wanted to prevent their daughter, Nada, from returning to Yugoslavia with her mother. Although Yugoslavia had approved Marija's return in 1959, she was unaware of this due to her husband's interference. Throughout this period, she remained under the watch of AVH agents, who occasionally tried to convince her to stay in Hungary rather than return to Yugoslavia. In 1962, she successfully repatriated with her daughter, but UDBA identified her as a potential agent to create divisions within the Yugoslav emigrant community in Hungary. She was tasked with corresponding with emigrants, and her communications were monitored. In the 1970s, while temporarily working in SR Germany, she remained an "operational liaison" and "collaborator" for the Secret Service.[39] Thus, Marija serves as an example of a woman who was simultaneously controlled and empowered as a political agent by both the Hungarian and Yugoslav secret services. They exploited her close connection to the emigration community but also to her child, using her and her daughter's future prospects as a form of blackmail and control over her actions, a situation that rarely occurred among male members of the IB emigrant community.

The Service continued to monitor IB returnees as long as they deemed them useful. Upon returning to Yugoslavia, these individuals, particularly their Eastern European wives, were subjected to various intelligence measures. Standard methods included wiretapping, mail scrutiny, deploying informers to get close to the wives, and restricting travel for relatives of IB emigrants to Eastern Europe. They also confiscated items intended for relatives abroad. Additionally, the Service sought or fabricated compromising material to blackmail individuals, forcing them to either leave Yugoslavia or submit to coercion.[40] The methods applied equally to both men and women, with the choice depending on the specific situation, not gender. Any means deemed useful for achieving the ultimate goal were considered. Surveillance of women was linked to their societal status, relationships, potential for coercion, and those close to them, including their children. This surveillance often extended to their children, especially those born in Eastern European countries. Soviet citizens, raised with loyalty to the USSR before coming to Yugoslavia, were viewed with particular suspicion.

According to the document "Acute Tasks of the SDB in the Light of the Events connected with the Occupation of Czechoslovakia," after Yugoslavia normalized relations with the USSR, a total of 1,366 individuals were repatri-

[39] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, Personnel dossier No 144701, Marija Šalavardić.

[40] See also: Nielsen, *Jugoslavija i politička ubojstva*, 60-69.

ated, including 309 married to foreign citizens. Among them were 266 Russian women, 20 Bulgarian women, 14 Romanian women, 9 Polish women, 5 Hungarian women, and three each from Czechia and Albania. Most were suspected of working for the Soviet secret service, with suspicion also extending to those from Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia.[41] The SDS gathered detailed information on these women, viewing them as the core of Soviet intelligence and the strongest concentration of agents. While documentation is lacking on the specific reasons for the couples' repatriation to Yugoslavia, some husbands returned due to nostalgia, while others faced hardships abroad. Interestingly, educated and established wives often resisted returning, preferring to stay close to loved ones, while less-educated women were more accepting of repatriation. The SDS reports suggest that marriages between Eastern European citizens and IB emigrants were part of well-known intelligence tactics. These women were interviewed by police before marriage and quickly received permits and travel documents, leading to what the SDS called "orchestrated marriages," through which women were sent to Yugoslavia to fulfill intelligence tasks.[42]

Files on many women in the IB emigration detail their lives from education to surveillance. These records range from brief to extensive, covering movements, contacts, behavior, and surveillance strategies. Educated women with wide networks, especially those linked to high-ranking individuals in Eastern Europe, were considered the biggest threats. The Service aimed to either force them out of Yugoslavia or recruit them to cooperate with the SDS, as seen in cases like Tamara Livić Košuškina and Renata Volos.

The significant impact of SDS surveillance measures on the returnees' wives should not be underscored, as some remained unaware of these implications. Although some women were employed by the secret services of the countries where they resided, making them presumed and expected targets for SDS surveillance, others were oblivious to being monitored and followed. Often, close associates were SDS informants, tasked with not only providing information about everything that happened to them, what they said or planned, but also actively playing a role in their lives. Informants were often given specific instructions and tasks on how to behave towards which woman, how to approach her and gain her trust, and how to manipulate her in this way.

During strained relations with Eastern bloc countries, intelligence activities intensified, and monitoring of IB emigration continued even after normalization with the USSR. Yugoslav authorities believed repatriation would

[41] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, Šifra 0, Unutarnja problematika. 011/32. Neprijateljska djelatnost IB-povratnika i članova njihovih užih obitelji u razdoblju od 1974. do 1976. g. i rad SDB-a., 1. 9. 1977.

[42] Bukvić, *Gastarbajteri pod nadzorom*, 200, 304.

reduce the significance of emigration and worked to encourage emigrants to return, excluding national minorities. It was emphasized that "all actions should appear natural and logical, without arousing suspicion that our Service is behind them."[43]

Soviet and other foreign intelligence services tried to retain IB emigrants by offering education, better jobs, housing, higher salaries, pensions, and support for their families in Yugoslavia. They also spread information about the difficulties faced by returnees, especially regarding employment, which was largely true as many struggled to find work. One tactic used to discourage repatriation was delaying the issuance of documents for the wives of IB migrants, particularly Russian women. These women were problematic for counterintelligence, as they acted as propaganda for the USSR. Moreover, as citizens of the USSR, they were able to gather a substential information legally and pass it on to the Soviet embassy in Belgrade. These women, often highly educated, maintained personal contacts and correspondence, strengthening the IB returnee community while publicly supporting Soviet policies.[44] They frequently communicated with Soviet representatives and, like their husbands, traveled to the USSR to visit relatives, where they established contacts with IB emigrants and officials from the Ministry for State Security *(Ministerstvo gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti, MGB).*[45]

Many of returnee's women were highly educated and employed in high-level positions. Accoriding to the SDS data, some of them were confirmed to be agents of the Soviet Military Intelligence. Twelve women were officially processed, and thirteen were not. Those identified as recruited or attempted to be recruited by the Soviets were Dešković, Krajačić, Sučević, Visković, Volos, and three were concluded to be counterintelligence assets used by the Russians (Tamara Livić, Evgenija Ilić, Roza Cinoti). In order to gather information, the SDS conducted briefings, controls, and created situations for their definitive return to the USSR. Some of them did return (Puljan, Bok, Ninković, Lovrić), while others did not (Cinoti, Livić, and Volos). The SDS also implemented measures of so-called "pasivizacija," meaning they sought to prevent their activities – conducting interrogations of women and and

[43] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/3, 1. Pokretanje krivičnog postupka protiv nekih informbiroovaca – emigranata, bez godine.

[44] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/9, Informbiroovska emigracija IB-povratnici iz SSSR-a. 2. Neki aktualni momenti iz života IB emigranata u SSSR-u, 1958.

[45] Ministry for State Security (Russian: Ministerstvo gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti, MGB), was a Soviet state security apparatus dealing with internal and external security issues and secret police duties, foreign and domestic intelligence and counterintelligence, etc. from 1946 to 1953.; HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/11, Podaci o suprugama IB povratnika iz SSSR-a nastanjenih u NR Hrvatskoj. 1. Brojčani pregled, 1962.

worked on creating discord among the women and mutual isolation (partially achieved with Livić, Buić, Cinoti, Bukić). The Service also worked to encourage the women to acquire citizenship of the People's Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FNRJ) and thereby isolate themselves from the Russians. This was done by influencing husbands, their relatives, and friends, but without results until the writing of this report.[46]

To gather documentation, the SDS wiretapped the apartments of women like Livić, Buić, Cinoti, and their husbands at strategic moments to create a sense of insecurity. The SDS collected compromising material on individuals such as Dešković and Visković. A key tactic involved so-called "intimacy actions," where intimate photographs or correspondence were documented, often under codenames like "Katedra," "Novčica," and "Auto." Zoja Buić, for instance, was targeted in one such operation when her private correspondence was collected. These measures aimed to pressure and recruit women to work with the SDS. One case involved Ana Bukić, née Sohanjuk, whose husband had been recruited by Soviet counterintelligence in 1951 to monitor IB emigrants. The SDS created compromising material on Bukić, controlled her mail, and attempted to involve men in intimate situations to blackmail her into cooperation.

Similarly, the SDS believed that some women were working for foreign intelligence services. Regina Dešković, a Soviet citizen, was found to have been recruited in the USSR to monitor her husband. After returning to Yugoslavia, she lived in Split and maintained contact with Soviet citizens and members of the Baltic Fleet. The SDS employed collaborators, codenamed "Janez," "Martin," and "Mate," to monitor her. They collected audio recordings and set her up with a man to develop an intimate relationship, which they then used for blackmail, gathering both audio and photographic evidence. This was done to pressure her into working for the SDS.[47]

Roza Cinoti Rijabova was one of the most intriguing targets of the SDS. Born in Zagorsk-Moscow, USSR, she was an educated engineer-technologist and married Neven Cinoti, an IB emigrant who later returned to Yugoslavia. Before her marriage, she had been a member of the Komsomol but chose not to join the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks. Her family remained in the USSR, and she visited them occasionally. In 1949, she married Cinoti, and they returned to Split in 1958 with their two children, where she worked as an engineer at the company "Jugoplastika". The SDS viewed Roza as the most politically radical and negative among the wives of IB returnees in Split,

46 HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/11, 1962.

47 Ibid.

noting her strong influence over her husband. She was seen as a leader among the women in this community, organizing gatherings at her home to celebrate Soviet holidays and encouraging others to reject Yugoslav citizenship. This activism attracted significant attention from the intelligence services. Roza was portrayed in SDS reports as a defiant and immoral person, allegedly prone to promiscuity, alcohol, and socializing. She was described as being dominant over her husband, with reports suggesting that she sometimes physically abused him and that he took on domestic chores like a "housewife".[48]

Roza Cinoti's open loyalty to the USSR and her outspoken criticism of Yugoslav socialism, particularly of its leaders, led the Yugoslav State Security Service (SDS) to intensify its surveillance on her. Informants were assigned to report on her activities and statements. One informant, codenamed "Neven," attended a party at Cinoti's house with his wife, a friend of Roza. In his reports, he described how Roza frequently complained about her life in Yugoslavia, expressing a strong desire to return to Russia. Roza mentioned that if she returned, she would publicize the mistreatment she experienced in Yugoslavia, even considering leaving her children in Russia for their future. In addition to "Neven," other informants, such as "Janez," "Nikola," and "F3," were also used to monitor Roza's activities. Even fellow emigrants like Regina Dešković, the wife of an IB returnee who had been recruited by the NKVD, provided information. Dešković famously remarked that if people knew what she knew about the Cinoti family, there would be no place for them in Yugoslavia. Due to Roza's occasional travels to the USSR, the SDS proposed the "Cetina Operation," which involved wiretapping her apartment in Split. Detailed plans were made regarding where and how to place listening devices, taking into account the apartment's layout in the building, to effectively monitor her conversations and activities.[49]

Despite the extensive measures taken by the SDS, there was no evidence that Roza Cinoti had direct contact with the Soviet Secret Service, nor with anyone from Yugoslav intelligence. While it was suspected that her connections might be based in Belgrade, the SDS saw potential in recruiting her to gain insights into Soviet activities. To achieve this, they attempted to create a new network of informants around her, both at her workplace and home, and focused on involving her husband in their surveillance efforts. The existing network of collaborators was given more precise instructions to enhance control over her movements and interactions. Although no solid proof of her involvement with Russian intelligence surfaced, Roza maintained regular contact with the Soviet embassy, receiving newspapers, magazines, holiday

48 HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, Personnel dossier No 20164, Cinoti Rijabova Roza.

49 Ibid.

cards, and maintaining relationships with Soviet experts. This consistent communication with the Soviet diplomatic community aroused the SDS's suspicions. They considered her a potential asset for the Soviets and thus expressed the need to create compromising material to either neutralize her influence or "passivate her completely," although the exact meaning of this is unclear. Roza remained a subject of SDS interest for years, a fact underscored by an incident in 1976 when her daughter, Svjetlana, was being considered for a position involving intergovernmental affairs. At that time, the SDS initiated a background check on Svjetlana, requesting information about her parents, indicating the enduring mistrust towards Roza and her family.[50]

Although the IB emigration was the most active and dangerous for Yugoslavia in the period from 1948 until Stalin's death, its importance in later periods can be seen in the fact that the IB returnees were still singled out as a separate subgroup of the IB emigration because of their "danger to society" in 1974, 26 years after the Cominform Resolution and after the adaptation of the Programme Orientation by State Security Service. The work programmes of the Secret service, government departments and police headquarters elaborated maximum coordination of their monitoring in the mid-1970s.[51] IB emigration as an object of surveillance by the Yugoslav secret service survived until the collapse of the state.

One of the most notable SDS orchestrated surveillance operations of the later period was "Operation Volga," focused on observing intelligence activities through mixed marriages. Commencing on December 30, 1979, it continued until September 3, 1993. Mixed marriages were particularly interesting to the SDS because female citizens of EE countries were always under suspicion of espionage. Additionally, there was evidence that some of these marriages were fictitious, and female EE citizens paid their future spouses to marry them, with the goal of legally entering Yugoslavia. Some of these women, such as Svjetlana Kukuljan, were highly educated, often engineers, and there were suspicions that they engaged in industrial espionage at their workplaces.[52] The fact that this action was initiated long after the tensions sparked by the Cominform Resolution suggests that suspicions and distrust toward the Eastern Bloc, and concerns about attempts to undermine Yugoslav order and organization, endured. Remarkably, the conclusion of this operation coincided with

[50] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 10/11, 1962

[51] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, Šifra 0, Unutarnja problematika, 011/32. Neprijateljska djelatnost IB-povratnika i članova njihovih užih obitelji u razdoblju od 1974. do 1976. g. i rad SDB-a, September 1, 1977.

[52] HR-HDA-1561-SDS RSUP SRH, 2, 210/49, Akcija "Volga" – mješoviti brakovi sa državljanima IE zemalja; 1. OA "Volga" - Sagledavanje obavještajnih aktivnosti kroz dvojne brakove; 211. Obavještajne službe SSSR-a, 2/7 Akcije "Volga," "Neva," "Val 86," "Kurgan," "Obala." 2/7, 1978.

the time when Yugoslavia had already disintegrated, and the independent and autonomous Republic of Croatia had been established.

Conclusion

This paper serves as an introductory exploration into the broader research on IB migrant women. It outlines the historical context of Yugoslavia, particularly post-World War II and the pivotal year of 1948 marked by strained relations with the USSR and the Eastern Bloc. This tension persisted until 1953, witnessing a gradual normalization after Stalin's death. The IB emigrants faced a dilemma during the conflict between the USSR and Yugoslavia. Forced to choose between their home country and the adopted nation, many sided with the USSR, aligning themselves with a perceived hostile faction within the emigration.

This subset of emigrants, viewed as a threat by Yugoslav authorities, was suspected of actively conspiring to overthrow the existing order in collaboration with the USSR. Women were integral members of the IB emigration, some already abroad and others fleeing post-conflict to settle in Eastern European countries. Women from Eastern European countries who married IB emigrants and later returned to Yugoslavia were also deemed part of the IB emigration. Their actions were subject to intense scrutiny, with suspicions of foreign affiliations, leading to strict surveillance of the Yugoslav secret service UDBA/SDS. The organization established an extensive network of informants, often individuals closely trusted by those under surveillance. Various operational measures were enacted, and concerning women, while many surveillance practices mirrored those applied to men, there were also some gender-specific practices. In efforts to limit their mobility and interactions, some women were banned from traveling abroad, including their children when deemed appropriate. Gender-specific surveillance practices involved "actions of intimacy," less frequently employed on men. Moreover, utilizing children as a means of exerting control over these women was a prevalent tactic, unlike in the case of men. Surveillance periods ranged from several years to decades. While some monitored women were confirmed agents of foreign services, others, although suspected, were not. To maintain control, the Service sought to discover or fabricate compromising material for women deemed more dangerous. This material would then be used for potential blackmail, compelling them to collaborate with the Yugoslav secret service. This collaboration involved revealing existing information, obtaining new information, and spying on contacts within the emigration or diplomatic circles, particularly those with whom the women, especially returnees, frequently interacted.

The paper showcases examples of IB migrant women, including Bosiljka Marjanović Roganović, Dušanka Dragila, Radmila Verstovšek, Atena Milunić, Marija Šalavardić, Roza Cinoti Rijabova and mentions several other. While their destinies differ, they simultaneously paint a collective picture of the lives of IB migrant women.

Undoubtedly, this article is not a conclusion but rather the inception of a broader research endeavor. Many questions raised herein warrant further exploration and elaboration.

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